REV. DR. TALMAGE.

The Eminent Washington Divine's Sunday Sermon.

The Christian Home and What It Should Be—A Powerful Test of Character—Various Meanings of Home—Can Be Made the Brightest Place on Earth

TEXT: "Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee," Mark v., 19.

There are a great many people longing for some grand sphere in which to serve God. They admire Luther at the Diet of Worms, and only wish that they had some such great opportunity in which to display their Christian prowess. They admire Paul making Felix tremble, and they only wish that they had some such grand occasion in which to preach righteousness, temperance and judgment to come; all they want is only an opportunity to exhibit their Christian heroism. Now the evangelist comes to us, and he practically says: "I will show you a place where you can exhibit all that is grand, and beautiful, and glorious, in Christian character, and that is the domestic circle."

If one is not faithful in an insignificant sphere he will not be faithful in a resounding sphere. If Peter will not help the cripple at the gate of the temple, he will never be able to preach three thousand souls into the kingdom at the Pentecost. If Paul will not take pains to instruct in the way of salvation the jailer of the Philippian dungeon, he will never make Felix tremble. He who is not faithful in a skirmish would not be faithful in an Armageddon. The fact is, we are all placed in just the position in which we can most grandly serve God; and we ought not to be chiefly thoughtful about some sphere of usefulness which we may after a while gain, but the all-absorbing question with you and with me ought to be: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me now and here to do?"

There is one word in my text around which the most of our thoughts will this morning revolve. That word is "Home." Ask ten different men the meaning of that word, and they will give you ten different definitions. To one it means love at the hearth, it means plenty at the table, industry at the workstand, intelligence at the books, devotion at the altar. To him it means a greeting at the door and a smile at the chair. Peace hovering like wings. Joy clapping its hands with laughter. Life a tranquil lake. Pillowed on the ripples sleep the shadows.

Ask another man what home is, and he will tell you it is want, looking out of a cheerless fire-grate, kneading hunger in an empty bread tray. The damp air shivering with curses. No Bible on the shelf. Children robbers and murderers in embryo. Every face a picture of ruin. Want in the background and sin staring from the front. No Sabbath wave rolling over that doorsill. Vestibule of the pit. Shadow of infernal walls. Furnace for forging everlasting chains. Awful word! It is spelled with curses, it weeps with ruin, it chokes with woe, it sweats with the death agony of despair.

The word "Home" in the one case means everything bright. The word "Home" in the other case means everything terrific.

I shall speak to you this morning of home as a test of character, home as a refuge, home as a political safeguard, home as a school, and home as a type of heaven.

And in the first place I remark, that home is a powerful test of character. The disposition in public may be in gay costume, while in private it is in dishabille. As play actors may appear in one way on the stage, and may appear in another way behind the scenes, so private character may be very different from public character. Private character is often public character turned wrong side out. A man may receive you into his parlor as though he were a distillation of smiles, and yet his heart may be a swamp of nettles. There are business men who all day long are mild, and courteous, and genial, and good-natured in commercial life, damming back their irritability, and their petulance, and their discontent; but at night-fall the dam breaks, and scolding pours forth in floods and freshets.

The reason men do not display their bad temper in public is because they do not want to be knocked down. There are men who hide their petulance and their irritability just for the same reason that they do not let their notes go to protest. It does not pay. Or for the same reason that they do not want a man in their stock company to sell his stock at less than the right price, lest it depreciate the value. As at sometimes the wind rises, so after a sunshiny day there may be a tempestuous night. There are people who in public act the philanthropist, who at home act the Nero with respect to their slippers and their gown.

Now, that man who is affable in public and who is irritable in private is making a fraudulent overissue of stock, and he is as bad as a bank that might have four or five hundred thousand dollars of bills in circulation with no specie in the vault. Let us learn to show piety at home. If we have it not there, we have it not anywhere. If we have not genuine grace in the family circle, all our outward and public plausibility merely springs from a fear of the world or from the slimy, putrid pool of our own selfishness. I tell you the home is a mighty test of character. What you are at home you are everywhere, whether you demonstrate it or not.

Again, I remark that home is a refuge. Life is the United States army on the national road to Mexico, a long march with ever and anon a skirmish and a battle. At eventide we pitch our tent and stack the arms, we hang up the war cap and lay our head on the knapsack, we sleep until the morning bugle calls us to marching and action. How pleasant it is to rehearse the victories, and the surprises, and the attacks of the day, seated by the still campfire of the home circle!

There is the place where we may talk of what we have done without being charged with self-adulation. There is the place where we may lounge without being thought ungraceful. There is the place where we may express affection without being thought silly. There is the place where we may forget our annoyances, and exasperations, and troubles. Forlorn earth pilgrim! no home? Then die. That is better. The grave is brighter, and grander, and more glorious than this world with no tent for marchings, with no harbor from the storm, with no place of rest from this scene of greed, and gouge, and loss, and gain. God pity the man or the woman who has no home.

Further, I remark, that home is a political safeguard. The safety of the State must be built on the safety of the home. Why cannot France come to a placid republic? Ever and anon there is a threat of National capsize. France as a nation has not the right kind of a Christian home. The Christian hearthstone is the only corner-stone for a republic. The virtues cultured in the family circle are an absolute necessity for the State. If there be not enough moral principle to make the family adhere, there will not be enough political principle to make the State adhere. "No home" means the Goths and Vandals, means the Nomads of Asia, means the Numideans of Africa, changing from place to place, according as the pasture happens to change. Confounded be all those Babels of iniquity which would overtower and destroy the home. The same storm that upsets the ship in which the family sails will sink the frigate of the constitution. Jails and penitentiaries and armies and navies are not our best defense. The door of the home is the best fortress.

Further, I remark, that home is a school. Old ground must be turned up with subsoil plow, and it must be harrowed and reharrowed, and then the crop will not be as large as that of the new ground with less culture. Now, youth and childhood are new ground, and all the influences thrown over their heart and life will come up in after life luxuriantly. Every time you have given a smile of approbation, all the good cheer of your life will come up again in the geniality of your children. And every ebullition of anger and every uncontrolable display of indignation will be fuel to their disposition twenty, or thirty, or forty years from now—fuel for a bad fire a quarter of a century from this.

Oh, make your home the brightest place on earth, if you would charm your children to the high path of virtue, and rectitude, and religion. Do not always turn the blinds the wrong way. Let the light which puts gold on the gentian and spots the pansy pour into your dwellings. Do not expect the little feet to keep step to a dead march. Do not cover up your walls with such pictures as West's "Death on a Pale Horse," or Tintoretto's "Massacre of the Innocents." Rather cover them, if you have pictures, with "The Hawking Party," and "The Mill by the Mountain Stream," and "The Fox Hunt," and "The Children Amid Flowers," and "The Harvest Scene," and "The Saturday Night Marketing."

Above all, my friends, take into your homes Christian principle. Can it be that in any of the comfortable homes of my congregation the voice of prayer is never lifted? What! No application at night for protection? What! No thanksgiving in the morning for care? How, my brother, my sister, will you answer God in the Day of Judgment, with reference to your children? It is a plain question, and therefore I ask it. In the tenth chapter of Jeremiah God says He will pour out His fury upon the families that call not upon His name. O parents, when you are dead and gone, and the moss is covering the inscription of the tombstone, will your children look back and think of father and mother at family prayer? Will they take the old family Bible and open it and see the mark of tears of contrition and tears of consoling promise wept by eyes long before gone out into darkness?

Oh, if you do not inculcate Christian principle in the hearts of your children, and you do not warn them against evil, and you do not invite them to holiness and to God, and they wander off into dissipation and into infidelity, and at last make shipwreck of their immortal soul, on their death-bed and in their Day of Judgment they will curse you. Seated by the register or the stove, what if on the wall should come out the history of your children? What a history—the mortal and immortal life of your loved ones. Every parent is writing the history of his child. He is writing it, composing it into a song or turning it into a groan.

My mind runs back to one of the best of early homes. Prayer, like a roof, over it. Peace, like an atmosphere, in it. Parents, personifications of faith in trial and comfort in darkness. The two pillars of that earthly home long ago crumbled to dust. But shall I ever forget that early home? Yes, when the flower forgets the sun that warms it. Yes, when the mariner forgets the star that guided him. Yes, when love has gone out of the heart's altar and memory has emptied his urn into forgetfulness. Then, the home of my childhood, I will forget thee! the family altar of a father's importunity and a mother's tenderness, the voices of affection, the funerals of our dead father and mother, with interlocked arms like intertwining branches of trees making a perpetual arbor of love, and peace, and kindness—then I will forget them—then and only then. You know, my brother, that a hundred times you have been kept out of sin by the memory of such a scene as I have been describing. You have often had raging temptations, but you know what has held you with supernatural grasp. I tell you, a man who has had such a good home as that never gets over it, and a man who has had a bad early home never gets over it.

Again, I remark, that home is a type of heaven. To bring us to that home Christ left His home. Far up and far back in the history of heaven there came a period when its most illustrious citizen was about to absent Himself. He was not going to sail from beach to beach; we have often done that. He was not going to put out from one hemisphere to another hemisphere; many of us have done that. But He was to sail from world to world, the spaces unexplored and the immensities untraveled. No world had ever hailed heaven, and so far as we know heaven had never hailed any other world. I think that the windows and the balconies were thronged, and that the pearly beach was crowded with those who had come to see Him sail out the harbor of light into the ocean beyond.

Out, and out, and out, and on, and on, and on, and down, and down, and down He sped, until one night, with only one to greet Him, he arrived. His disembarkation, so unpretending, so quiet, that it was not known on earth until the excitement in the cloud gave intimation that something grand and glorious had happened! Who comes there? From what port did He sail? Why was this the place of his destination? I question the shepherds, I question the camel drivers, I question the angels. I have found out! He was an exile. But the world has had plenty of exiles—Abraham an exile from Ur of the Chaldees; John an exile from Ephesus; Kosciusko an exile from Poland; Mazzini an exile from Rome; Emmett an exile from Ireland; Victor Hugo an exile from France; Kossuth an exile from Hungary. But this one of whom I speak to-day had such resounding farewell and came into such chilling reception—for not even a hostler went out with his lantern to help Him in—that He is more to be celebrated than any other expatriated one of earth or heaven.

It is ninety-five million miles from here to the sun, and all astronomers agree in saying that our solar system is only one of the small wheels of the great machinery of the universe, turning round some one great center, the center so far distant it is beyond all imagination and calculation, and if, as some think, that great center in the distance is heaven, Christ came far from home when He came here. Have you ever thought of the homesickness of Christ? Some of you know what homesickness is, when you have been only a few weeks absent from the domestic circle. Christ was thirty-three years away from home. Some of you feel homesickness when you are a hundred or a thousand miles away from the domestic circle. Christ was more millions of miles away from home than you could calculate if all your life you did nothing but calculate. You know what it is to be homesick even amid pleasurable surroundings; but Christ slept in huts, and He was athirst, and He was a-hungered, and He was on the way from being born in another man's barn to being buried in another man's grave. I have read how the Swiss, when they are far away from their native country, at the sound of their national air get so homesick that they fall into melancholy, and sometimes they die under the homesickness. But, oh, the homesickness of Christ! Poverty homesick for celestial riches. Persecution homesick for hosanna. Weariness homesick for rest. Homesick for angelic and archangelic companionship. Homesick to go out of the night and the storm and the world's execration, and all that homesickness suffered to get us home.

At our best estate we are only pilgrims and strangers here. "Heaven is our home." Death will never knock at the door of that mansion, and in all that country there is not a single grave. How glad parents are in holiday times to gather their children home again. But I have noticed that there is almost always a son or a daughter absent—absent from home, perhaps absent from the country, perhaps absent from the world. Oh, how glad our Heavenly Father will be when He gets all His children home with Him in heaven! And how delightful it will be for brothers and sisters to meet after long separation! Once they parted at the door of the tomb; now they meet at the door of immortality.

Gates of pearl, capstones of amethyst, thrones of dominion, do not stir my soul so much as the thought of home. Once there let earthly sorrows howl like storms and roll like seas. Home. Let thrones rot and empires wither. Home. Let the world die in earthquake struggle, and be buried amid procession of planets and dirge of spheres. Home. Let everlasting ages roll irresistible sweep. Home. No sorrow, no crying, no tears, no death. But home, sweet home, home, beautiful home, everlasting home, home with each other, home with God.

One night lying on my lounge, when very tired, my children all around about me in full romp, and hilarity, and laughter—on the lounge, half awake and half asleep, I dreamed this dream: I was in a far country. It was not Persia, although more than Oriental luxuriance crowned the cities. It was not the tropics, although more than tropical fruitfulness filled the gardens. It was not Italy, although more than Italian softness filled the air. And I wandered around looking for thorns and nettles, but I found that none of them grew there, and I saw the sun rise, and I watched to see it set, but it sank not. And I saw the people in holiday attire, and I said: "When will they put off this and put on workmen's garb, and again delve in the mine or swelter at the forge?" But they never put off the holiday attire.

And I wandered in the suburbs of the city to find the place where the dead sleep, and I looked all along the line of the beautiful hills, the place where the dead might most blissfully sleep, and I saw towers and castles, but not a mausoleum or a monument or a white slab could I see. And I went to the chapel of the great town, and I said: "Where do the poor worship, and where are the hard benches on which they sit?" And the answer was made me: "We have no poor in this country." And then I wandered out to find the hovels of the destitute, and I found mansions of amber and ivory and gold; but not a tear could I see, not a sigh could I hear, and I was bewildered, and I sat down under the branches of a great tree, and said: "Where am I? And whence comes all this scene?"

And then out from among the leaves, and up the flowery paths, and across the bright streams there came a beautiful group, thronging all about me, and as I saw them come I thought I knew their step; and as they shouted I thought I knew their voices; but then they were so gloriously arrayed in apparel such as I had never before witnessed that I bowed as stranger to stranger. But when again they clapped their hands and shouted: "Welcome, welcome," the mystery all vanished, and I found that time had gone and eternity had come, and we were all together again in our new home in heaven. And I looked around, and said: "Are we all here?" and the voices of many generations responded: "All here." And while tears of gladness were raining down our cheeks, and the branches of the Lebanon cedars were clapping their hands, and the towers of the great city were chiming their welcome, we all together began to leap and shout and sing "Home, home, home, home!"

TRUMPET CALLS.

Ram's Horn Sounds a Warning Note to the Unredeemed.

PREJUDICE is the sword of fools.

Frog is the gossip's sunshine.

Covetousness is cussedness nicknamed.

Knowledge will grow until the last scholar is dead.

If only good men could marry, the world would be full of old maids.

Mother, is the little child's Bible.

Slow promises make the best time.

Opinions never change the weather.

A fool's company is not hard to find.

Honesty has never found a substitute.

He that is always calm is always brave.

He is very unfortunate that has no trouble.

Gold loses its shine when it is gotten by guilt.

Nature is the supernatural partially unveiled.

The best safe for your money is a prudent wife.

Threads of Thought.

To know one's self is to distrust one's self.

Each life may have a potentiality of greatness.

To be misunderstood by those we love is bitterest of all.

Find a disinterested friend and you have found a jewel.

The greatest study of all is that of the changes of the mind.

Success has sometimes to be paid for, after having been fairly earned.

One is led to think that there is but little that is constant nowadays save mutability.

The philosopher takes his fortune much as he does his health—enjoys it when it is good, endures it when bad, and seeks extreme remedies only at the most urgent need.

PONIES OF ICELAND.

PERFECT MARVELS OF ENDURANCE.

They Have a Peculiar Pacing Gait Which Under Great Weight Conquers Space—Can Swim Like a Fish and Climb Like a Goat.

If the camel is the ship of the desert, the Iceland pony is the cab, train, omnibus and tramcar of the wonderful country to which he belongs. To begin with, he is a misnomer. He is not a pony, in the ordinary sense of the word; he is a horse; in bone and sinew, in strength and endurance, in manners and deportment—a horse in everything, in fact, except in inches; and a sober, steady, hard-working horse, too. He is very "multum in parvo," a "concentrated essence" of horseflesh. He can swim like a fish, climb like a goat and jump like a deer. He sticks at nothing, and takes every variety of travel—bog, lava bed, sand, bowlders and grass mounds—with undisturbed equanimity. If he has to ford one or two rivers with strong currents flowing girth-deep, it is all in the day's work. Only give him time and periodical halts for refreshment, and he will do his fifty miles per day, and thrive upon it.

Iceland ponies are bred in hundreds in the large grass plains in the southern districts of the islands. Little or no care is taken in selection, so that half hands, though here and there one improved, the average pony standing from eleven and a half to twelve and a half hands, though here and there one will reach to nearly thirteen hands. Every variety of color is seen, but skewbalds of many shades are the commonest. The chestnuts, as a rule, are the finest, and the browns the hardiest. Beautiful cream colors, with light points, are not infrequent; black is very rare, and roan also. Their paces are fast, considering the size of the animal, a journey of thirty-two miles being often done in six hours or less, with heavy baggage. They trot, canter and gallop, but the pace most esteemed by the natives is the amble or "sheld," in which the fore and hind legs on a side are advanced simultaneously, giving a running action, very smooth to the rider. A good "pacer" is considered very valuable, and often sold for a high figure. Some of these ponies amble so fast that they keep ahead of another going at a hand-gallop, and they maintain the pace for a day's journey under a weight of eleven to fourteen stone. Iceland ponies are steady and fast in harness, though wheels are a comparatively new departure in their country.

They travel mostly in strings, often tied head and tail. Hay, baggage and household goods are thus transported, and building material also. You meet a "timburlestur," or timber team, of from eight to ten ponies, one carrying planks trailing on each side, another strips of iron, another bundles of tools; a number of spare animals running loose, and not infrequently a foal or two.

It is as rare to see a dead Iceland pony as a dead donkey though their skulls are often visible, half trodden into the miry ways surrounding the farms. The pony begins work at six or seven years—hard work, that is to say. He is early apprenticed to his trade by following his mother at her avocations, and when he is foot sore is strapped upon her back. He works well up to twenty years and over, and often remains fairly sound to a ripe old age. He feeds on the fat of the land in the summer, and in the winter, if his owner is poor, must live on his wits and his stored condition. Farmers who are fairly well off keep their animals in during the winter and feed them on hay; but, notwithstanding, many of the ponies have a hard time of it. The Icelanders,h owever, keep their steeds as well as their means allow, and treat them altogether in a brotherly fashion.

THE DOG AS FOOD.

Facts That Klondikers May Learn Through Experience.

"The more we know of men, the more we like dogs," writes misanthropically that great friend of animals, M. Toussenal. Perhaps it is because the inhabitants of the Celestial empire do not know men sufficiently well that they still regard the dog as an edible animal, and as one of the most savory of morsels. But it is to be hoped, says La Nature, that in the progress of civilization a day will come when these brave animals—"candidates for humanity," according to Michelet's picturesque expression—will no longer figure on the menus of state dinners at the Court of Peking.

Darwin relates somewhere that when the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego are pressed by famine they kill and eat their old women rather than their dogs, and that in Australia fathers will sacrifice their children in order that the mothers may be able to nourish this useful servant of man. The Chinese, however, tend and fatten their dogs carefully—to eat. They also consider the cat a choice dish. The Abbe Le Noir, in his "Travels in the Far East," relates that in the markets of many cities are to be seen dogs and cats hanging side by side by the head or tail, and that on most farms these animals are kept in little coops like hencoops. They remain thus from two to three weeks, condemned to almost complete immobility, and are fed on nothing but a mixture of rice and farina. We do not know the edible dog or the edible cat in France, and probably since the siege they have been but little served—openly at least—on the tables of Paris restaurants. At Peking and throughout China, however, there is no dainty repast without its fillet or leg of dog; the cat is rather a dish of the poorer classes.

These same customs that are so repulsive to us as to seem like a kind of semi-cannibalism existed, nevertheless among the people of classic antiquity. History tells us that in early times the dog was always regarded as an edible animal. The inhabitants of certain nomes of Egypt piously embalmed their dead dogs, but others considered that it was more in conformity to the doctrines of a wise economy to kill and eat them. Plutarch tells us that the dwellers in Cynopolis, where dogs were honored as divine, made war on the Oxyrinchis, who had committed the sacrilege of eating dogs. In his book on diet, Hippocrates, speaking of common articles of food, is of the opinion that the flesh of the dog gives heat and strength, but is difficult of digestion. "Our fathers," says Pliny, "regarded small dogs as so pure a food that they used them for expiatory victims. Even to-day young dog's flesh is served at feasts held in honor of the gods." And further on: "This meat was used in the installation feasts of the pontiffs." According to Apicius, who has left us a curious treatise on "Cookery," the Romans ate also adult dogs.

The saveges of North America, for lack of provisions, often sacrifice their companions of the chase. We are told that before the introduction of cattle the Spaniards in Mexico used the native dogs so freely as food that the species has now completely disappeared. According to Captain Cook, the natives of New Zealand ate their dogs and clothed themselves in the skins. Forster adds: "They love the flesh passionately, and prefer it to that of the pig." The Greenlanders and the Kamchatkans also sometimes eat their dogs, but only when reduced to this cruel extremity by famine. In Africa dogs form the food of certain negro tribes. In the Ashantee country the flesh is eaten both fresh and dried. And it appears that in the lower Congo region, among the Batekes, there is a custom that must make every friend of dumb beasts rage with indignation—before killing a dog for food it is maltreated and tortured, to make the flesh more tender.

The Education of the Indian.

That the Indian has a capacity for higher education appears from facts given in the eighteenth annual report of the Indian Industrial School at Carlisle, Pa. During the past year five students from Carlisle has attended Dickinson College, one at Metzger College for Women. Others have attended the Carlisle High School, some have been to the normal schools of the state, Drexel Institute at Philadelphia, and the nurses' schools at Philadelphia, New Haven, and Hartford. One of the pupils, after graduating from a New England normal school, was employed last year in a high school in Connecticut, and taught so successfully as to be recalled and given a permanent situation as teacher. Thus far no difficulty has been experienced in placing all those who showed a desire for higher education than is given at Carlisle. There, for manifest reasons, the education is of a practical industrial character, as best fitted to make the Indian self-supporting in his changed condition. As a further means of inducing the Indian boys and girls into civilized family and national life, the outing system has been adopted. During the fiscal year 1897, there were placed out from the Carlisle School, for longer or shorter periods, 410 boys and 319 girls. Of these 104 boys and 101 girls remained out all winter, attending district and other Americanizing schools with the young people of the families in which they resided, earning their board with their work out of school hours. By an extension of this system the school could economically care for 1,500 children, or about twice the present number enrolled. The children placed with families last year earned a total of $20,448.39, of which the boys earned $13,185.27, and the girls $7,263.12. From these amounts the boys saved $6,426.03, and the girls $3,288.21. Boys and girls who have been out a number of times have acquired the ability to earn full wages.

The Age of Needles.

There is reason to believe that needles were known to the early ancient Romans, and by them used from a very early date. The Hebrew, Chinese and Hindoo records furnish abundant evidences that they also were familiar with this useful implement. It is not remarkable that none have been discovered, as the quality of steel of which they are made will not resist the corroding influence of the atmosphere. The Moors taught the Spaniards how to make needles, and to Spain England owes her knowledge of this important bit of handicraft. For many years, however, the manufacture of needles in England was in the hands of foreigners, who guarded the secrets of their trade with the most jealous care. It was not until the year 1650 that this industry became of any great commercial importance in England.